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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00	EUR-01	HA-09
	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-02	PRS-01	P-01	SNP-00	SP-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00	RPE-00	/041W	

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O 042030Z DEC 92
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5974
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 12745

E.O.12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, MARR, PINS, VE
SUBJECT: FORMER PRESIDENT CALDERA REJECTS COUPS, BLAMES PEREZ GOVERNMENT

REF: A) CARACAS 12652, B) CARACAS 12528

1. (U) SUMMARY: IN A TAPED TELEVISION INTERVIEW SHOWN THE EVENING OF DECEMBER 3, FORMER PRESIDENT RAFAEL CALDERA CONDEMNED THE NOVEMBER 27 COUP ATTEMPT AND REPUDIATED ALL EFFORTS TO CHANGE THE GOVERNMENT BY FORCE. HOWEVER, HE SAVED HIS HARSHEST WORDS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "AN ACCOMPLICE" OF THE COUP

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PLOTTERS INASMUCH AS IT HAD CREATED THE ENVIRONMENT WHICH ENABLED THE REBELS TO LAUNCH THEIR MILITARY UPRISING. THE SHOWING OF THE CALDERA INTERVIEW WAS DELAYED WHEN THE GOV INSTRUCTED TELEVISION AND RADIO STATIONS TO CONSTITUTE A NATIONAL NETWORK AND BROADCAST A SPEECH BY THE DEFENSE MINISTER. THIS IN TURN LED CALDERA TO CHARGE THAT THE GOV WAS ABUSING ITS POWERS AND TRYING TO IMPEDE THE BROADCAST OF HIS REMARKS. END SUMMARY

2. (U) FORMER PRESIDENT -- AND SELF-DECLARED PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR THE 1993 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED
DATE/CASE ID: 08 AUG 2006 200503206

-- RAFAEL CALDERA OFFERED HIS VIEWS ON THE POST-COUP SITUATION IN AN INTERVIEW TELEVISED LATE DECEMBER 3. AS HE HAD IN RECENT REMARKS, CALDERA DEFENDED DEMOCRACY, CONDEMNED THE NOVEMBER 27 COUP ATTEMPT, AND REPUDIATED ANY ACTION TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT BY FORCE.

3. (U) HOWEVER, CALDERA MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ (CAP) WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GENERALIZED DISCONTENT AND ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT WHICH HAD CREATED AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH LED TO THE MILITARY REBELLION. IN THIS CONTEXT, HE DESCRIBED THE PEREZ GOVERNMENT AS BEING AN "ACCOMPLICE" OF THE COUP PLOTTERS. HE ADDED THAT THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT INSTITUTIONAL SOLUTIONS TO THE POLITICAL CRISIS (READ: SHORTEN CAP'S TERM IN OFFICE) HAD GIVEN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE PARTISANS OF A VIOLENT SOLUTION. (COMMENT: THIS IS THE SORT OF FORMULATION THAT WORKED WELL FOR CALDERA IN FEBRUARY. NOW THAT THE INITIAL SHOCK OF NOVEMBER 27 HAS WORN OFF, HE IS RETURNNG TO HIS OLD SONG.)

4. (U) CALDERA DESCRIBED CAP'S DECEMBER 1 SPEECH AT THE CLOSING OF THE CONGRESSIONAL SESSION AS BEING "FULL OF NONSENSE, CONFUSION, ABSURD BRAZENNESS" (REF B), AND CRITICIZED THE PRESIDENT'S "LAMENTABLE TRIUMPHALISM." CAP, HE ASSERTED, CONFUSED THE PUBLIC'S REJECTION OF DICTATORSHIP WITH SUPPORT FOR HIS GOVERNMENT. THE FORMER PRESIDENT ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT OF TRYING TO PORTRAY ANY CRITICISM BY THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO COUP PLOTTERS, AND CHARGED THAT THE GOV SOUGHT TO EXPLOIT THE CURRENT SITUATION SO AS TO ASSURE THE VICTORY OF THE GOVERNING DEMOCRATIC ACTION PARTY IN THE 1993 NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

5. (U) THE INITIAL BROADCAST TIME FOR THE CALDERA INTERVIEW WAS PUSHED BACK SOME 30-45 MINUTES INTO THE LATE EVENING WHEN THE GOV INSTRUCTED THE TV AND RADIO CHANNELS TO FORM A NATIONAL NETWORK SO AS TO BROADCAST A SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. CALDERA EXPRESSED OUTRAGE AT THIS ACTION AND ACCUSED THE GOV OF ATTEMPTING TO IMPEDE THE BROADCAST OF HIS INTERVIEW. HE CLAIMED THAT INFORMATION MINISTER ZAMBRANO ADMITTED AS MUCH WHEN THE LATTER TOLD HIM THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION WAS DELICATE AND THAT CALDERA'S REMARKS WERE DAMAGING. CALDERA CLAIMED THAT THIS RESPONSE BY ZAMBRANO UNDERLINED THE GOV'S

EFFORTS AT MANIPULATION AND REPRESENTED AN ATTACK ON THE LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION.

6. (C) COMMENT. SOUNDS LIKE POLITICS AS USUAL JUST ONE WEEK AFTER THE FAILED MILITARY REBELLION. CLEARLY THE GOV AND THE RULING AD PARTY ARE ATTEMPTING TO MILK AS MUCH POLITICAL AND ELECTORAL ADVANTAGE AS THEY CAN FROM THE

NOVEMBER 27 COUP ATTEMPT. JUST AS CLEARLY, CALDERA (AND THE REST OF THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION) WILL INSIST THAT PUBLIC REJECTION OF THE NOVEMBER COUP MEANS SUPPORT FOR THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM AND NOT SUPPORT FOR THE POLICIES OF THE GOV NOR FOR CAP AS THE PRESIDENT, AND THAT OPPOSITION TO THE CAP ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT MEAN THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF FUTURE COUPS.

SKOL